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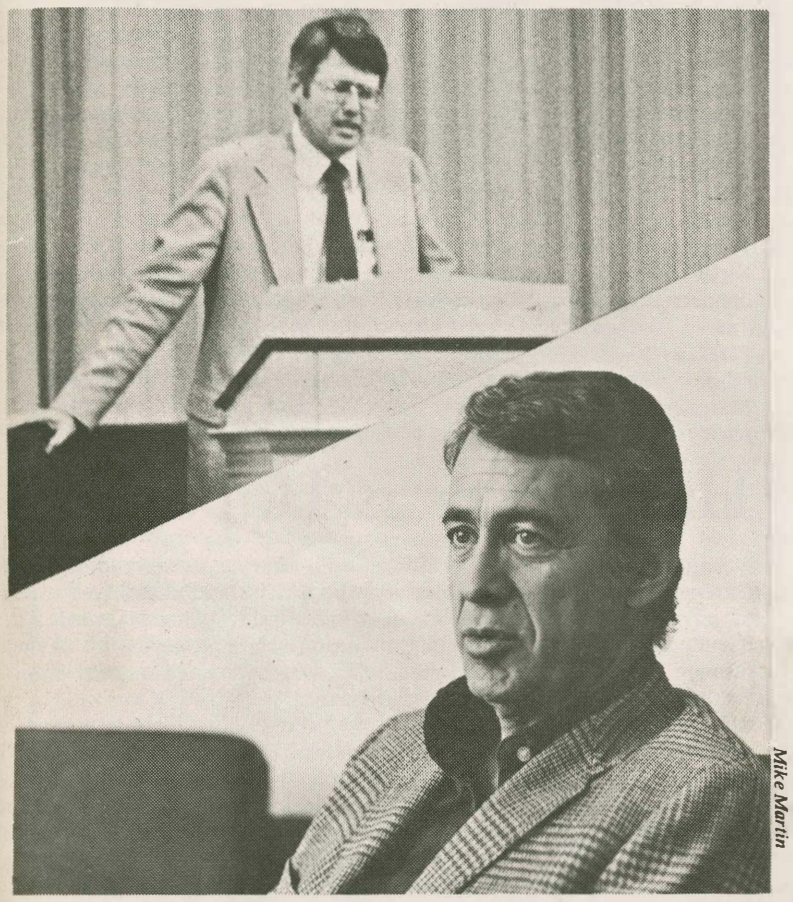
KIRKLAND FUTURE UNCERTAIN

Trustees Ask Hamilton Funding; Answer May Come In June



Mike Martin

Carovano and Babbitt: Is the Difference Fiscal or Philosophical?

By BOB McCORMICK

The Kirkland College Board of Trustees has asked the Hamilton College Trustees for a five-year guarantee of financial security in the form of a $3 million gift , if necessary, to keep the college solvent, according to Kirkland President Samuel Babbitt.

Babbitt made the announcement to the Kirkland community in the Kirner-Johnson Auditorium Monday afternoon. Kirkland students, faculty, and administration listened intently as Babbitt voiced his opinion that the Hamilton Trustees would refuse the request and advocate a merger of the two colleges.

The Kirkland President said that a coeducational institution with a single administration would be the likely outcome of Hamilton's refusal to extend long term financial support to Kirkland. Such a merger would end the ten-year experiment with coordination between the two schools.

But Babbitt emphasized that Kirkland has not accepted such a merger as inevitable. "The Trustees and administration of Kirkland continue to stand committed to Kirkland as a coordinate institution for women," he declared, drawing loud applause from the audience. Throughout his speech Babbitt emphasized that no decision has been made by the Trustee Boards.

The Hamilton and Kirkland Trustees will convene in June, when the Hamilton Board will consider the feasibility of making an extended financial commitment to Kirkland.

Babbitt advised Kirkland students to make their feelings known to Hamilton trustees. "Collect your thoughts as rationally as possible in order to explain what about this coordinate arrangement must be preserved and how," he told them.

The Trustees of both colleges met jointly last weekend to discuss coordination in general and Kirkland's financial request in particular.

An Outright Grant

Babbitt did not speak of the fiscal guarantee in detail at the community meeting, but afterward he told The Spectator that such a commitment would ideally take the form of an outright grant of up to $600,000 which Kirkland could draw upon if needed in each of the next five years.

Freed from some of the concerns of meeting daily operating costs, Kirkland would be able to focus its fundraising efforts on its ten-year, $20-million capital campaign, which has progressed well to date. According to Babbitt, $3.3 million has been raised since the campaign began last October.

Babbitt told the Kirner-Johnson assemblage that the Kirkland Trustees knew of "no viable alternative" to Hamilton funding if Kirkland is to survive. He explained that Kirkland has operated on its reserve funds for the past two years, and those reserves are now exhausted.

In response to a student's question, the President noted that the Kirkland Board would probably accept a loan from Hamilton, but that a more "positive form of commitment to the pattern of coordination was being sought."

Responding to another question, Babbitt said that major concessions demanded from Kirkland in return for financial aid would be unacceptable. "Both schools are agreed that a cosmetic arrangement would be worthless--we are either autonomous, or we are not," he stated.

Babbitt expressed confidence that Kirkland could succeed in the long run on the strength of its capital campaign if Hamilton would agree to help its sister school over the next five years. "I think we would be ill-advised not to give it a try," he said.

Babbitt to Leave

But the President confirmed persistent rumors that, in any event, he would not remain as Kirkland's head past June, 1978, a resignation date he said he had established for himself a number of years ago.

Babbitt cautioned his audience that they must be prepared for the eventuality of a merger if no support is forthcoming from Hamilton. "This campus isn't going to disappear, and Kirkland's ideals are not going to disappear [in the event of a merger]," he said. "We have, in the worst of circumstances, a year to plan."

Kirkland Academic Dean Catherine Frazer drew hearty applause when, in response to the question "Will Hamilton change the Kirkland philosophy?" she replied:"Maybe Kirkland can help to change the Hamilton philosophy."

The President emphasized that any change would not take place prior to June, 1978. He added that it is his understanding that any student in good standing at Kirkland would be guaranteed admission to a new, coed institution, and that degree requirements would not change for students enrolled before a consolidation occurred.

Babbitt said that he was unsure whether faculty vacancies would be filled next year.

The Problem Is Not Fiscal

Kirkland senior Paula Canny asked Babbitt whether the issue of Kirkland's continuation was a philosophical or a fiscal one. Babbitt responded that "the two are inextricably wound up like chicken and egg. The problem is not fiscal in that a merged institution would have a greater operating deficit."

Students Informed In Chapel

By JACK HORNOR

Addressing a packed Chapel Monday afternoon on the subject of coordination with Kirkland, Hamilton President J. Martin Carovano said that the ~~least costly~~ of three options which are being considered would be consolidation.

The reply came in answer to a student's question about Carovano's cost/ benefit analysis of three possible options which the Board of Trustees of both Colleges will consider this June.

Carovano opened the meeting, called so that he could address Hamilton students, with a statement from Coleman Burke and Francis Musselman, chairmen, respectively of the Hamilton and Kirkland boards.

The statement said that at meetings over the past weekend the two boards had discussed "the relationship between the two colleges." The trustees discussed "fundamental curricular, administrative and financial aspects of the coordination relationship."

According to the statement, "Changes in the relationship between the two colleges may evolve" from the discussion in June.

After reading the statement, Carovano noted that the discussions on cooordination between the boards had been "going on for quite some time."

He outlined three possible options the trustees would probably consider:

--improve curricular coordination; do nothing else

--improve curricular coordination; work closer together and improve financial coordination

--improve curricular coordination; work closer together and improve financial coordination; work closer together legally (i.e., some form of combination of the colleges would occur).

The President, when questioned, noted that the result of either the second or third option would be that Hamilton's endowment income would be used for more students.

Carovano came under heavy questioning from students about the third option, which he said had been really discussed for the first time this past weekend. He explained that in 1971-1972 Kirkland had borrowed 1.8 million dollars from Hamilton. Since then it has met current obligations through normal revenues raised each year.

However, Kirkland will not be able to meet its obligations next year without assistance from Hamilton. Carovano said that Hamilton would lend Kirkland whatever it needs to cover next year's needs.

If the third option is chosen, the result will be one college, one charter, one board of trustees, one president and one administration, including the consolidation of admissions and faculty. Admitted Kirkland students would be made students of the new institution.

Carovano said that all other changes, particularly in the curriculum, would be worked out during the school year, and with the consultation of students and faculty.

Carovano On Coordination

J. Martin Caravano, President of Hamilton College, was interviewed Monday night by Fred Ackerson. Parts of the text follow:

Q: Kirkland College received from Hamilton College 1.8 million dollars in its first five years. Now it's asking for financial support for next year and for three million dollars in support over the next five years. Is such support financially feasible for Hamilton?

A: Your facts are basically correct; from the time it began operation through 1971-72, Kirkland borrowed 1.8 million dollars from Hamilton. Since that time Kirkland has borrowed nothing from Hamilton. This year it seems clear that Kirkland will need some kind of assistance from Hamilton and Hamilton stands ready to provide it. It is also true that one of the things that the Boards discussed this time was a proposal from the Kirkland Board to the Hamilton Board that Hamilton commit itself to three million dollars in support over five years. The feasibility of that is really something I can't determine because that's part of what the Board is discussing. That's one of the issues.

Q: You outlined three broad options in your speech Monday on improving the academic and financial relationship between Hamilton and Kirkland. Would you clarify those?

A: I was trying to suggest the range of questions the Trustees were considering. They obviously could conclude that the colleges ought to be better coordinated curricularly with no changes with respect to the legal separateness or financial independence of the two. That's one extreme. The other extreme, I think, is to come to the conclusion that the colleges ought no longer be legally separate nor financially independent but somehow consolidated into one legal-administrative-financial entity, and there are things in between, which I suggested. One alternative was that in addition to improving curricular coordination, there would be a closer financial tie between the two colleges, but still they would remain legally separate. This proposal from the Kirkland Board to the Hamilton Board that Hamilton make a committment over a five-year period is this kind of closer financial linkage.

Q: Concerning the third option wherein the colleges would join legally: How might they join? And would that make Hamilton and Kirkland one coed school?

A: As I tried to suggest, I think the most the Board is going to be able to do soon is to arrive at some general agreements on principles. For example, if they were to choose the last, the most extreme if you will, alternative that I discussed, I think all they would do is agree in principle that they wished the colleges to become one legal, administrative, financial entity. Having reached that principle, I think it would take at least a year for those of us on campus to specify just what all that means. I think it means attempting to blend the strenghts of Hamilton and Kirkland into one workable educational enterprise.

Q: How much of a financial advantage would be gained by making the two schools closer financially or legally?

conintued on page two

Coleman Burke Comments

The Spectator spoke with Coleman Burke, chairman of the Hamilton Board of Trustees, shortly after noon on Tuesday. According to Hamilton President J. Martin Carovano, Burke is the only person authorized to speak for the board. Below are a few of his comments on the future of the colleges.

"Ten years ago, if Hamilton had decided to go coed, we would have had chaos beyond belief. We look back with pride on founding a fine institution.

"We only want to see top-notch education continue on College Hill for both men and women. We made an investment in bringing women to College Hill. We think it is a success story and we want to continue it. The question is, 'What is the best setup for doing the job?'.

"I don't think any of us have a closed mind in this situation. If anyone has a better idea that we haven't heard, we want to know about it."

When asked which option he preferred, Burke said he had "Not finally made up my mind." He admitted that there had been some "arguments strongly made" about not continuing coordination, but said, "I haven't crossed the bridge on that yet."

"Kirkland has done a lot for Hamilton. And I respect the emotional attachment of women to Kirkland. We want to try to work out the differences (in the situation) in good spirit and judgement.

"All we try to do is do the best."

Carovano Gives View

(continued from page one)

A: If you link us more closely financially, there's not much saving involved in that. There would be some savings if the institutions became one legal-administrative-financial entity, because a lot of redundancy in the administration would disappear. A good deal would be saved; I'd estimate several hundred thousand dollars. On the other side of the coin, and this makes the question difficult, is that when you're talking just in financial terms, ignoring the educational advantages of coordination, because you have a separate administration and institution funds are being raised that might not be raised by the consolidated institution. You have to weigh the savings against the loss of income that would result from consolidation.

Q: Obviously the financial considerations are not the only ones. There must be a good deal of argument over how the education system would be radically changed under closer coordination. What are your views on this?

A: In discussing this with the Trustees I have found it useful to separate the issues into three categories: educational, financial and what I called competitive advantages of coordination, by which I mean our ability to attract students. I've suggested that the Trustees must consider all of those things as they think about what they will do.

Q: How long have the Boards been throwing these options around? Are there any specific plans or are certain groups of people leaning in any direction?

A: What the Boards have been doing is discussing the curricular, financial and administrative aspects of coordination. What I was attempting to do by means of those examples was to clarify, for students in particular, the kinds of things the Board was considering. The Board has not come at this matter saying "Here are options one, two and three." They have just been talking about what the educational advantages of coordination are and what coordination means administratively. They haven't talked in terms of the options I used; those were to try to make sure that the students understood that the issues being considered were fundamental.

Mike Martin

Carovano in Chapel Monday

Q: The Boards meet jointly in June. Will they come up with some concrete plan, or is it in the early talking stages?

A: I think it's likely that they will begin to determine the general direction in which they will go at that meeting.

Q: But a final decision or plan might be far away?

A: Yes, it depends on the direction they choose. To do one particular thing may be less complex than to do something else.

Q: There's also the state that the people here are in. They may not have a concrete idea about the future for some time.

A: One of the things that was difficult today (Monday) was to tell students and faculty that the Board was talking without being able to say what the Board was likely to do. After the Board meets in June, if we can't say much except "They're still talking", I'm not sure we'll communicate again to students and faculty. I'll have to wait and see. But if after they meet in June there's something to be said, then certainly we'll let people know. Maybe we'll conclude that even if no progress has been made we should tell people that too. I can certainly say that we are very sensitive to keeping all of our constituency abreast of what is going on.

Kirkland Protests With Rally and Letter Campaign

The Kirkland College community has rallied together swiftly and strongly in an effort to prevent a merger between Hamilton and Kirkland.

In an overflow meeting in the Kirner-Johnson Auditorium last night, students organized a rally, and letter-writing campaigns, and discussed the possibility of seniors taking some action at graduation. The meeting was attended by a large number of Hamilton students.

The rally will be held this evening in the Alumni Gymnasium at 7:30.

The letter-writing campaign is aimed at alerting the Hamilton Trustees to the deep feelings towards Kirkland held by various people connected with the two colleges, and to let them know exactly how Kirkland women feel towards their school. The organizers of the campaign urged people to write to parents, alumni and trustees, and urged students to get anyone else in an influential position with the Hamilton trustees to write to them expressing their opinions in the matter. Desks have been set up in Bristol and McEwen with information giving suggestions of what to write and lists of the Hamilton trustees.

The thrust of the letter-writing campaign will be telling the Trustees about special things that have happened to the individual student because of her attending Kirkland, explained organizer Melinda Foley.

"The Hamilton trustees expected opposition, especially from Kirkland, but I don't think they expected this much. They expected less opposition from Hamilton, but the reaction from the Hamilton students has been very good; the Senate will take care of writing to the Hamilton alumni for their support of Kirkland," said Foley.

Havemeyer is Hopeful

Eugenie Havemeyer, vice-chairwoman of the Kirkland Board of Trustees, emphasized in a telephone interview Tuesday night that no decisions have been made by the Boards regarding Kirkland's financial situation, and that everything is open for discussion.

Havemeyer, expressing hope about Kirkland's ability to raise funds, said, "I'm optimistic. It's hard to raise money in this day and age, but we have a great success story."

Taking into consideration the necessity of a presidential search soon to replace Sam Babbitt, Havemeyer noted that Kirkland would have to know exactly what its relationship with Hamilton was before it could consider anyone for the position.

"A discussion of relationships could go anywhere. The identity of Kirkland is very important to the women who go there, and it's very important for the women to say what Kirkland has meant to them," said Haveymer.

"Coordination is not easily understood. It's important for graduates to document strong objective sentiment, how important Kirkland has been to them," she added.

EDITORIAL

Kirkland needs a pledge of financial support from Hamilton to survive as an independent women's college.

Hamilton Trustees should not hesitate to extend that guarantee to their coordinate partners.

Over a long period the dollars-and-cents figures are, as Kirkland President Sam Babbitt has said, irrelevant. The issue is simply, coordination.

It would be irrational, as President Martin Carovano and the Hamilton Board of Trustees must realize, to scrap the coordinate experiment simply because Kirkland has exhausted its reserve funds. Kirkland has graduated just five classes in its ten years; its oldest alumnae have yet to reach 30. The college cannot expect significant support from this quarter for at least a decade. Hamilton's Trustees foresaw that Kirkland would need heavy subsidization during its early years; to renege now on the commitment they made 15 years ago would be shameful.

A coeducational institution would operate at a greater deficit than Kirkland does presently—so says President Babbitt, and President Carovano agrees to a point.

Hamilton can supply the $3 million Kirkland may need over the next five years without risking insolvency. The $3 million represents 10 percent of Hamilton's endowment. If the college wished to preserve its endowment intact it might divert some of its capital campaign income for Kirkland's use.

Recent events indicate that President Carovano and the Hamilton Trustees are not firmly committed to coordination as a workable educational enterprise. Perhaps they feel that coordination has failed. Kirkland and Hamilton students must address their professions of coordination's value to this misconception.

Coordination has not failed; it simply requires a greater cooperative effort from both partners. Kirkland has not failed as an educational institution; it needs to step up its presently inadequate admission efforts and better promote its worth as a unique women's college.

Overriding all other concerns is the educational advantage of coordination as opposed to coeducation. If coordination is at all feasable financially, as seems to be the case, it is preferable because of the educational options it yields. The present range of course offerings and teaching methods available to Hamilton and Kirkland students could not be duplicated at a coeducational institution under a single administration and educational philosophy.

Kirkland is valuable. Consolidation would make it a shadowof its dynamic self. A merger would not make College Hill any more attractive to prospective students; who can prove that it wouldn't have the opposite effect?

Consolidation is not inevitable. Students have a voice, and that voice must be communicated to President Carovano and the Hamilton Board of Trustees within the next two weeks.

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Deans' Statements

"I came to Kirkland because I believed coordination had unique values, and I still believe it," said Catherine Frazer, Kirkland Dean of Academic Affairs.

"But the ideal of coordination is one that still, on the practical, functional level, has not been fully explored," she said. Speaking of Kirkland's future, Frazer said, "There is constant change; the quality and direction of the difference emanates from the hearts and minds of students. You do it in the heart, not in the structure. If we are here, and continue to be here, it will make a difference."

Gulick Declines Comment

Hamilton Dean of the College W. Lawrence Gulick said that he had been thinking on the issue of coordination for many months, that he had communicated his views to President Carovano, President Babbitt, Dean Frazer, and both boards of Trustees, and he said, "I think that's where I should leave it."

Compelled to Maintain Autonomy

By ANN BAKER

I believe that there are compelling reasons to avoid the merger of Hamilton and Kirkland Colleges. The philosophical differences in educational approach practiced by the two schools have provided students at both schools with a rewarding and diverse selection of options. The very suggestion of merger implies the end of many of these differences.

Some people characterize the disagreement between the schools as destructive. We can, however, disagree in philosophical approach and in eudcational practice in constructive ways. This is the belief behind the oft-used phrase "creative conflict." It seems that coordination can provide many more alternatives in meeting the educational needs of the student bodies of Hamilton and Kirkland.

The announcement made by President Babbitt to the Kirkland community was met with quite different reaction than President Carovano's address to the Hamilton College Community. (This is epitomized by the different questions raised at the meeting; Kirkland student:'How will this affect the present Kirkland Faculty?", Hamilton student: "Will this improve the food service on the hill?") The difference in reaction is probably due, in part, to the differences in the messages of the two college presidents. The reaction of Kirkland students was in many instances an emotional response to the suggestion that the college they selected to attend be, in effect, demolished. I'm surprised that this response was not characteristic of Hamilton students as well.

Still, the strong loyalty of many Kirkland students and faculty, coupled with the respect of their peers across the street can even now influence the recommendation of the Hamilton Administration, especially President Carovano, to the Hamilton Board of Trustees, and perhaps the final resolution of the matter.

There will be numerous places for student input of ideas and energy. I believe that Hamilton and Kirkland students are best served by coordination and can work through coordination to express student feelings on the issue. The maintenance of the autonomy of Kirkland College is a prerequisite to the special style of education that students receive on College Hill, whichever institution they attend.

student opinion

In Support of Union

By JACK HORNOR

Kirkland needs $3 million to survive for another five years? How will it get the money? It can't raise it from its alumnae or from foundations, so its's asking Hamilton.

But if Hamilton's trustees are going to hand over 9.4 percent of the endowment, they will want changes made to assure Kirkland's financial stability. The easiest and most logical (although hardly the nicest) way would be to control the choice of Kirkland's next president.

But a president chosen or controlled by Hamilton would hardly be in Kirkland's best interests, especially as its students see it. And what changes would be required to break even? Kirkland students should think carefully about the price they may have to pay for ths kind of survival.

Beyond that, how ironic is it for a college of independent on big brother across the street?

The best option is for the Hamilton trustees to declare an end to the experiment by refusing to give the $3 million. This is thecourse I hope they choose. Coordination has been an awkward, ugly thing, unpleasant for many people and certainly not in anyone's best interest.

I believe that Hamilton cannot survive without women, and cannot survive without a varied and exciting curriculum. These two things are the very best parts of Kirkland, and they must be a part of the new Hamilton.

Our real problem is that coordination has obscured and diluted the benefits we should have been getting from the ideas and women at Kirkland, and which they should have received from Hamilton. Instead of stressing the good things, the system has stressed the bad things. The constant bickering between everyone has long been a weak point here. The system is a hindrance to quality, and that is why we need a single campus.

Considering how bad the coordinate relationship is, I can't see how the Hamilton trustees will choose to do anything but declare the experiment of Kirkland College at an end. They will have my support if they choose to do so.

student opinion